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State of Montana

Social and Rehabilitation Services



GUIDE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF
VOLUNTEER SERVICES

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I. INTRODUCTION

Today's volunteers in social welfare are carrying on a great tradition in American life. There has always been concern in our society for the well-being of others, expressed in colonial days by neighborly help and later channeled through groups of various kinds. Our generation has seen the development of organized welfare activity on a large scale. Volunteers have been active in all these developments.

As one observer has noted, "The pioneers in social welfare were volunteers. Before the caseworkers, before the group workers, before the medical specialists, there were the laymen who saw unmet human needs in their own communities and moved to meet them." They established settlements, day nurseries, associations for improving the condition of the poor, children's homes, and many other types of agencies of helpfulness, and to a large degree operated them through their own contributions of time and service. Thus they laid down a broad and solid foundation for the social welfare structure which we know today.

Around the turn of the century, as the country grew and the problems of industrialization and urbanization multiplied, professionalization of the employed service staff began to emerge. It was seen that the helping enterprise required unusual skill and understanding, and that this could be acquired through an educational process geared to the needs of people and the purposes of the agency. "And so followed a period when particular emphasis was placed on professional staff, and volunteers turned over to them more and more responsibilities for actually administering and operating agencies while they themselves withdrew to the somewhat remote status of board membership."

Currently, a widespread interest in recruiting volunteers has been reactivated due to limited staff, budget limitations, and the demand for broad supplementary service to enrich and extend the agency program. The need to recapture understanding of and commitment to social welfare goals can be achieved through direct citizen participation in the public welfare program.

A. Legal Base

The 1967 Amendments to the Social Security Act for all public assistance, medical assistance and child welfare programs require that the state move ahead progressively to develop and use volunteers as a part of its total social services program to provide improved services to clients.

B. Definition of a "Volunteer"

A volunteer is any person who contributes his personal service to the community. He is not a replacement nor a substitute for paid staff, but adds new dimensions to agency services. The volunteer may be compensated for expenses incurred in the giving of

service, but such payment does not reflect compensation for the time given nor for the value of services rendered.

C. Advantages of Volunteer Services

1. Volunteers in essence put the "public" back into public welfare. If volunteers are properly oriented and given meaningful experiences, they will favorably serve the agency in terms of public relations with the community. They will help explode some of the myths about the Department of Public Welfare and humanize the agency's role in the community. As volunteers begin to understand the problems of welfare and take part in solutions to these problems, the entire community will better understand and support the objectives of public welfare.

2. Caseworkers, though they will have the added responsibility involved in working with volunteers, will have a resource of services from which they may draw and utilize to supplement and enrich the social services presently provided.

3. The most obvious advantage will be the benefits in terms of services provided to the client, that he might otherwise not receive--a tutor for a child, a friendly visit to a lonely older person. These are important services that caseworkers haven't the time to do, yet they are recognized as needed services. They are indeed needed, concrete, beneficial services that can be provided by volunteers.

D. Why People Volunteer

Motivations that prompt individuals to give of their time and energies without remuneration include:

1. The genuine wish to help others--to feel useful. A recent survey conducted by the Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training, Washington, D. C., indicated that the most important reasons for volunteering as cited by the volunteers questioned was "the need to help others."

2. Volunteers feel they have something special to offer. In the same survey mentioned above, the volunteers were asked if they thought they contributed something to the program not contributed by the staff. Eighty-three percent replied that they contributed "something special" which was different from the staff.

3. Loneliness. This is true of the older volunteer who needs a satisfying experience and new friends. Also, many newcomers to a community need an opportunity to make new contacts and to learn more about the community.

4. The desire to seek the stimulation of the "outside world." This motivates young wives who feel hemmed in by household chores or those people who are in jobs that are routine and boring to them.

5. The sense of civic responsibility. This is especially true of young people who want to play a part in a dynamic society. Since the deaths of Robert Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, there has been a great upsurge in the interest in volunteering by young people.

6. The possibility that volunteering may lead to a paid job. Some lesser educated men and women from low-income areas enter volunteer service in the hope that they may learn skills which will lead to employment. The volunteer ranks can be a good source of recruitment for subprofessional jobs in SRS agencies.

7. Exposure to a career field. Young people in college or just out of college also volunteer so that they can gain knowledge about a professional field which they might later enter as a career.

E. Who Can Volunteer?

Volunteers should be drawn from persons with a wide range of talents, skills, and knowledge. These may be derived from life experiences, education, and training. They should be drawn from all walks of life--the affluent, the middle class, blue collar workers, and the poor.

A businessman can instruct in the wise use of credit and can explain interest rates in installment buying. An active club woman or church worker from a middle-class neighborhood can organize a team of volunteers who can recruit other volunteers. A mother who has learned how to rear a family on a small income can teach other mothers how to stretch their dollars.

A truck driver can coach a baseball team on Saturday. A musician can teach a talented child to play a musical instrument. A mother of a crippled child can help in a children's clinic.

Clients, patients, or recipients of SRS services can serve as volunteers. Because of their intimate knowledge of the problems of these who seek or need the agency's services and their ability to communicate with them, clients make excellent volunteers.

They can serve effectively as an additional person at the information or reception desk. They can man Children's corners in waiting rooms while the mother is seen by the doctor or caseworker. They can knock on doors to tell mothers about family planning clinics, and they can sit with the children at home while the mother attends the clinic. Clients can successfully teach consumer education.

Volunteers of both sexes should be utilized, as each has a special contribution to make, e. g., a man can act as a big brother to a boy who has no father, a woman can teach good grooming and charm classes for girls.

People of all age groups can serve as volunteers. Experience in the Foster Grandparents programs has demonstrated what older people can do to help children in institutions. Their work with mentally retarded has been outstanding.

Mothers whose children have gone away to college or married have much to contribute. College students, with their enthusiasm and fresh perspective, can assist agencies in gathering data needed in planning a program, or in delineating barriers to delivery of services. Teenagers can become pals to other teenagers who are handicapped, helping them to overcome obstacles and helping them to remain in school. Young teenagers have proved to be excellent aides in day care centers, and children as young as 10 years of age have successfully tutored younger children. In Overland Park, Kansas, youngsters from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades twice each week tutor first, second, and third graders in arithmetic.

II. VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There is virtually an unlimited variety of jobs that volunteers can perform. The following examples of appropriate services are not at all inclusive and hopefully will suggest other possibilities for volunteer contributions.

A. Administrative Services

These volunteer services are consultative, advisory or administrative assistance services which provide specialized knowledge or skills to agency administration in a particular area.

Examples of volunteer administrative services are to:

1. Serve on advisory committees or ad hoc committees to advise the county department.
2. Provide specialized knowledge through consultation with staff in areas such as home economics, child care and home management, use of professional resources, etc.,
3. Gather facts and statistics for evaluation of client's needs, community resources or department services.

B. Indirect Services (Does not involve direct contact with client.)

These volunteer services are supportive services provided by individuals or groups who become interested in the problems of clients, but because of time limitations, particular skills, interests and personal preference, choose to offer indirect services to clients. Examples of volunteer indirect services are to:

1. Provide facilities or supplies for activities such as group meetings of clients, foster parents, or volunteers.
2. Locate resources in a community, such as housing, furniture, appliances, special clothing needs, etc.

3. Provide clerical assistance for volunteer programs or special short-term projects.

C. Direct Services

These volunteer services are direct help services provided to the client, encompassing activities which are not ordinarily expected to be provided by social work staff and which can be more appropriately performed by volunteers. Such services should be established as part of the total services regularly available to assist clients and should be part of the social worker's service plan, as needed. Examples of volunteer direct service:

1. Escort Service -- Transporting clients to medical facilities and other appointments, providing opportunity for shopping, obtaining food stamps, recreation and church attendance. This is not just chauffeuring, but involves understanding the meaning of the service to the client and relating to him as an individual. This service is especially helpful in rural areas where clients may have to travel long distances in order to obtain needed services.

2. Friendly Visitor -- Volunteers call on homebound or institutionalized lonely, elderly, or handicapped persons, to talk, read aloud, play games, run errands and listen. The volunteer would be a friend, someone who cares.

3. Baby Sitter -- Volunteers can take care of children for mothers who cannot afford baby sitting fees to free them for shopping, paying bills, attending classes or groups.

4. Housing Aid -- Volunteers keep abreast of current housing available, assisting clients in finding a suitable place to live.

5. Tutors -- Volunteers may assist with basic literary projects for adults, and counsel potential school dropouts, tutor retarded, normal, or gifted children.

6. Volunteers may also:

--Assist clients to take advantage of other department and community services or activities such as the food stamp program and senior citizen clubs.

--Instruct families in the care of their homes, plumbing, painting, carpentry, gardening and offering assistance in minor repair.

--Provide service in planning and manning a children's corner in the county department waiting room where children can play while their parents are in conference.

--Create a clothing shop where clothing is cleaned and repaired and made available to families in need.

--Introduce male or female influences into the lives of boys or girls lacking a father or mother. In counties where there is no existing "Big Brother" program, volunteers can provide help in meeting the spiritual, moral, and emotional needs of youngsters, guiding them toward socially acceptable behavior and helping them to experience a trust in adults and a faith in themselves.

The above list is by no means exhaustive. Individual caseworkers and clients will be a continual source of ideas for volunteer services.

D. A Skills Bank

Specially trained or skilled volunteers can perform special services needed from time to time but not on a regular basis.

Some examples:

A psychiatric social worker who does not wish to work full-time could be available for consultation in specific cases; an artist could occasionally help design brochures, a minister or priest could give counseling to clients who desire it; a retired cabinet maker could teach woodworking to a handicapped person; a nutritionist could train a group of client volunteers how to teach others to prepare well-balanced meals; a nurse could occasionally train women, who could in turn instruct others in home health and child rearing.

III. ADMINISTRATION OF THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

A. Administrative Structure

The success of a volunteer services program hinges on a good organization plan integrated with the total agency program. This demands a clearly defined structure with specific responsibility, authority and lines of accountability. The planning for volunteer services is as important as the planning for any other service provided by the agency. The same kinds of administrative procedures must be incorporated in the plan. For example:

1. Identification of tasks to be performed and skills required to do them;
2. Clear, concise job descriptions;
3. Orientation to the agency;
4. Training for the job;
5. Supervision and on-the-job training;
6. Written policies and procedures;
7. Periodic evaluation;
8. Established procedures for selection, placement termination;
9. Opportunity for advancement;
10. Recognition and appreciation of a job well done.

Adequate financial support of the program should become a part of the agency budget, along with procedures for reimbursement and handling of cash donations. Some provision should be made for handling small cash transactions informally. Underlying these factors is sufficient agency commitment to budget staff time for volunteer programs. Without such time built into support of these activities, they become resented chores, when they should be welcome strengths.

Coordination of volunteer services should be an assigned staff responsibility in order to assure a smoothly operating program. The volunteer coordinator position includes the following responsibilities:

1. Work with agency staff: In interpreting how volunteers become a part of the agency; in identifying volunteer opportunities; in evaluating the effectiveness of the program; and in keeping them abreast of current happenings.
2. Receive requests from staff for volunteer help.
3. Plan and carry out: Recruitment of volunteers (based on agency needs); selection and placement of individual volunteers; orientation and training sessions; assignment of supervisory responsibility; record keeping procedures; periodic evaluations, recognition programs; and public information program.
4. Work with the volunteer program advisory committee.
5. Prepare budget requests to administration and handle cash donations and reimbursement records for volunteers.
6. Develop and keep current a volunteer manual.
7. Work with other community agencies and groups in relation to volunteer services.
8. Handle offers of volunteer time, cash donations or materials. This includes acceptance or rejection and acknowledgements.

An Advisory Committee for volunteer services provides an added dimension to the program. The members bring individual skills and experience which help to broaden the scope of the agency. They can assume certain tasks to advance the program as well as assist in improving community understanding of the agency. Membership might include citizens who have broad experience in other agencies, representatives of the client group, professional social welfare workers from outside the agency and other interested, concerned individuals. It is important to have clearly defined committee functions, accountability and authority.

Possible functions:

--To assist in recruitment.

--To consider suggestions submitted by staff members for unmet needs which volunteers services could meet.

--To identify the role of the volunteer in specific jobs and to assist in the clarification of the job.

--To consider problems that arise in the volunteer program and to suggest possible solutions.

--To consider additional staff needs or realignment of duties.

The volunteer manual is one of the most valuable tools in helping individuals become oriented to the agency and in providing a clear understanding of the job to be done, the limits within which to function and how each task relates to the agency services. It is also useful for interpretation of the volunteer program to staff and administrative boards. Such a manual might include the following:

1. A brief statement about the agency and its services.
2. An administrative structure chart.
3. A description of how and where the volunteer coordinator fits into the agency structure.
4. Policies and procedures for volunteers, including a statement about confidentiality, hours and arrangements for substitutes.
5. Job description of volunteer assignments.
6. Copies of record forms, such as assignment and time cards, applications, evaluations, expense sheets, etc.,
7. A list of the advisory committee members and the committee functions.
8. Other pertinent information which would be helpful to the volunteer.

The manual might be developed by the advisory committee or an adhoc group. It should be reviewed periodically and revised as necessary. Agencies, such as American Red Cross, who operate extensive volunteer programs have developed manuals or handbooks which might be helpful guides. Hospital auxiliaries and institutions also might provide resources.

B. Budget

Sound planning includes an estimate of the cost of program. Without adequate financial support, the best of programs can be ineffective. The needs of a volunteer service program are somewhat different from other parts of the public welfare program. For example, materials for displays and exhibits are many times not being found in the central supply room of a public welfare department. There must be some arrangement for ordering such

supplies or for small amounts of cash to be available for their purchase. If coffee is being served to visitors in the reception area of the office, there is a need for cups, cream, sugar, and coffee. A budget for volunteer services program might include the following items:

1. Salaries--volunteer coordinator, clerical staff.
2. Office supplies, postage.
3. Program materials, art supplies, food, refreshments.
4. Volunteer expenses, transportation, bus fare, mileage, other approved expenditures.
5. Public information, printing, postage, photographs, displays and exhibits.
6. Petty cash, small expenditures for immediate purchases.
7. Insurance
8. Staff time--another consideration in budgeting is the amount of staff time (other than those directly concerned with the volunteer program) which can realistically be devoted to work with the volunteer. For example, supervision of a particular assignment, conferences and planning time.

C. Confidentiality

The need for confidentiality should permeate all aspects of the volunteer's relationship to the agency. This will include the initial interview, the placement process, all facets of his training, and his on-the-job service.

The factor of confidentiality has often been posed as a problem in using volunteers in public welfare. While agencies which have used volunteers do not consider this to be a major problem, thought should nevertheless be given to it. Adequate training and supervision will help to establish within the volunteer an understanding and respect for confidentiality. As a general rule, selected information concerning an individual or family should be available to a volunteer only if such information is determined necessary for the particular volunteer activity to be performed.

D. Physical Arrangements

Another important consideration in planning for volunteer services is where volunteers can do their work. If it is necessary for time to be spent in the agency office, there should be an appropriate place to sit, a desk or table on which to work and necessary equipment to do the job. There should be a place to put coats and other personal belongings so the individual is free and comfortable to move on with the task at hand. Volunteers should be able to arrive at the agency and go immediately to work without the uncertainty of "Where can I hang my hat today?"

IV. GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING A VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

A. Administrative Commitment

If the public welfare agency is to gain the added dimension and stature which soundly conceived and executed volunteer programs can give, there must be true commitment, in depth, to those actions which will make the programs effective. Following are twelve philosophical questions which ideally should be considered by all agency staff before a commitment to bring in volunteers is made. This is the first phase in establishing a sound volunteer services plan.

1. There is a readily observable need for volunteer services and this can be translated into clearly defined jobs for volunteers.

2. We are clear enough as to our professional tasks so that we may understand our own roles in relation to the volunteers.

3. We can budget the staff time which must be allocated to the effective implementation of volunteer programs.

4. Paid staff members, at all levels, have been involved in thinking through the proposal to use volunteers in agency programs and they will give support to the activities.

5. Our expectations of the level of volunteer performance are defined. We are prepared for unevenness of service, and turnover of workers which are almost always a part of such programs.

6. We will be able to assign responsibility to one central staff person for coordination of volunteer activities.

7. We are willing to make available supervision and training for the new recruits.

8. We are ready to accept the volunteers as colleagues, and to give them appropriate recognition for their services.

9. We will welcome volunteers from all social classes in the community so that our volunteer group will be truly representative of the total community which supports us. This includes our client group.

10. There is readiness to use volunteer participation at every appropriate level of agency service, up to and including policy making.

11. We are prepared to modify agency program in the light of volunteer contributions and possible enrichment of program.

12. We will help the volunteer see the implications for the whole community of the programs on which he is working. We will be comfortable with and able to encourage the social action of volunteers which should come from enlightened participation in social welfare programs.

B. Steps in Program Development

After a firm administrative commitment has been made, the following specific actions should be taken to develop the volunteer program. These steps may vary in particular county departments, depending on the particular situations.

1. Estimate a beginning budget--Plans for financing the position of volunteer coordinator and for payment of expenses of volunteers should be made. The budget may require readjustment as the plan develops and as the program is put into action, but there should be some estimate of costs.
2. Appoint a volunteer coordinator--This can be a new position or, in the smaller agency, a realignment of staff assignments. In any case, agency structure must be modified to incorporate volunteer services as an integral part of the total agency operation.
3. Appoint a volunteer services advisory committee or ad hoc planning committee. This committee can work with the volunteer coordinator in developing and initiating the program.
4. Prepare staff for volunteers--It is important that staff understand their role in relation to that of the volunteer. Staff should be cognizant of the obstacles and problems as well as the advantage of using volunteers.
5. Develop jobs for volunteers--Jobs should be developed to meet specific needs of clients. Since caseworkers see daily some of the needs as expressed by the clients, it is important that their knowledge and observation of clients' needs be fully utilized in developing volunteer jobs. Ideas and suggestions should also come from the clients themselves. Job descriptions outlining the limits within which the volunteer will function as well as a detailed description of duties and expectations must be devised. Job descriptions must define tasks in a clear, concise manner which has meaning to the lay public from which volunteers come. It is on the basis of specific job description that volunteers will be recruited.
6. Do all the mechanics, paper work, forms and procedures before seeking volunteers. A volunteers manual may be developed over a period of time.
7. Plan orientation and training programs in preparation for the arrival of volunteers.
8. Recruit for specific jobs as they are developed and follow established selection and placement procedures.
9. Show appreciation. This can be done informally on an ongoing basis and formally at special recognition events.
10. Evaluate the volunteer program periodically and make revisions to meet needed changes.

V. THE ROLE OF STAFF

It is the responsibility of the social work staff to carry on the primary work of the Department in the identification of client needs and the delivery of staff services to meet these needs.

A complimentary service, such as volunteer services, can be successful only with the sincere interest and cooperation of the social work staff. The objectives of the social worker and the volunteer are the same--better service which the client can use as needed to achieve independence, self-respect, strengthened family life, and a place of his own in the community. All or any of these can be achieved if the social worker, volunteer and client work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. Special training for staff should prepare them for their role in accepting and working with volunteers.

The attitudes of social workers toward their clients and toward the Department will make the difference between losing and retaining volunteers. New volunteers should be working with optimists who enjoy their work, believe in the objectives of the department and feel that they are attainable, believe that using volunteers will help attain these objectives and acknowledge the volunteers' importance and their work.

A. Identifying Client Needs

Social workers, supervisors and other administrators have a shared responsibility to stimulate the Department and the community to provide the kinds of volunteer services needed by clients.

It is the social worker's responsibility to assess the strengths and the weaknesses of the individual case situation. In the process, the worker should decide whether service might be complimented through the use of direct volunteer service. Social work supervisors in reviewing service plans with their workers should be conscious of those areas of need which would benefit from direct volunteer services. Preferably, the volunteer activity should have as its objective something the client can learn to do for himself or that will encourage him to make more effective use of community resources and become a more active participant in his community. Each activity selected should have a general time limitation set which is related to the amount of time considered necessary to accomplish the objectives of the worker's service plan.

When identification is made of areas of individual client needs or the needs of a number of clients that can appropriately be met through volunteer service which is not available under the county plan, this information should be communicated to the volunteer services coordinator with a recommendation that such a service be started. A listing of specific clients who would benefit may assist the coordinator to act on the recommendation.

B. Use of Volunteer Direct Services

When it is decided that a specific client could benefit from an available direct service by a volunteer, the worker interprets it to the client, pointing out the potential benefits and involving him in the decision and planning to use this service. This new type of service may not be readily accepted by clients who are not aware of any need for it or are not sufficiently knowledgeable about it to make a wise and considered decision about its use. The worker is to inform the client as fully as possible and concretely demonstrate how the volunteer might prove of use to him. Clients are free to accept or reject volunteer services without their decisions affecting the financial assistance or other services they receive.

When a volunteer is assigned for the client, the social worker and the volunteer are to perform together as a service team with each responsible for certain activities within the worker's plan. They are to check with each other periodically regarding problems and progress related to service objectives. The worker is also to keep informed regarding the client's use of the service and his evaluation of its value to him.

Upon notification of the assignment of a volunteer for the client, the worker is to share with the volunteer whatever information it is necessary for the volunteer to know about the client to provide adequate service within the worker's service plan and objectives. Some information regarding the volunteer's identity and experience is to be shared with the client so there will be common areas of understanding even before they meet. The worker can then make arrangements for the client and volunteer to meet at a time when the worker can introduce them to each other. If the service is to be given in a group, the worker may accompany the client to the first meeting. If the service is to be in the client's own home, the worker should accompany the volunteer on the first visit.

At the termination of the time agreed upon, or when the objective is reached, the volunteer, the client and the worker should confer regarding continuing or stopping, and reach a decision satisfactory to all concerned.

VI. RECRUITMENT

The development of a recruitment plan is the responsibility of the volunteer coordinator. The recruitment of volunteers should be initiated only after specific needs and skills have been identified by the agency. A written description of the duties, knowledge and skills required should be prepared for each volunteer activity. This job description is to be used as the basis for recruitment. Staff who recruit should be familiar with the department's various services. They should know and believe in the department's goals and philosophy. It is important to explain to prospective volunteers how they will fit into the department's overall plan of social services.

There are many sources from which volunteers may be recruited. Existing service groups such as Kiwanis, Lions Club, various religious

organizations, high school and colleges, fraternities and sororities, senior citizen groups, often provide reliable volunteers.

Members of these groups are experienced in volunteer service and should definitely be recruited. However, efforts should also be made to recruit volunteers from minority groups and socioeconomic levels which have traditionally not been provided opportunities for volunteering their services. Groups such as Montana State Low Income Organization and Welfare Rights Organization should be contacted. Client volunteers have proven to be very effective in contributing their skills through volunteers services. Many clients both young and old, have abilities, interests and time to give. Being able to give instead of always having to receive can be a strengthening experience for a recipient.

Although there are several methods of recruitment, particular departments must decide on the method most appropriate to its specific situation. If departments are in the initial process of establishing a volunteer program, it is advised to start with a small number of volunteers and to expand gradually as experience increases. Therefore mass recruitment campaigns are sometimes not feasible because they might bring more volunteer offers than can be handled. If mass media, such as newspapers, radio and television are utilized, carefully prepared material should be geared realistically to the volunteers services needed. Time and experience has shown that the most successful, long lasting and effective recruitment is continuous personal recruitment "one person contacting one person for one volunteer assignment". The satisfied volunteer, who identifies with the department's goals and purposes, and who has had first hand knowledge of client's problems can be the most effective personal recruiter.

This method, of course, is available only after the volunteer program is under way. Other effective methods of recruitment include public speaking to groups and "open-house" invitations to groups, organizations and individuals.

VII. SELECTION AND PLACEMENT

Selection and placement of specific volunteers for specific jobs is a vital step in the success of a volunteer program. The approach to this task will be similar to that of the agency's personnel department in its selection of paid staff. Matching the person with the job needs careful thought. The interview is perhaps the primary tool in this process, along with the written application.

When an individual volunteers for any type of service or a group volunteers to provide direct service, the actual selection and assignment of each volunteers is a one-by-one process. All members of a club are not to be blanketed in as volunteers merely by virtue of their membership. Some members will have the personal qualities, abilities, or skills needed for certain volunteer activities, others may not.

Many volunteers may be qualified to perform any of the several different types of activities. Some, however, may be far better suited to one kind of service than another. For example, some would be better

at friendly visiting with the aged than providing recreational leadership for a group of children.

Assignments should be made for a specific period of time which is in line with the objectives of the particular service to be performed. At the end of the designated period, the project should be evaluated and a decision reached as to whether to continue, to modify or to discontinue the particular service. In addition to being able to adjust volunteer activities to changing conditions, this also gives the client, the volunteer, and the department each an opportunity to withdraw gracefully and with dignity if that is the decision reached. No one is asked to pledge himself for life. Rather, the volunteer makes a solid commitment for a specific period of time. Although recruitment will be for specific assignments, some people will volunteer who are not interested in any of the available assignments. The same interview process should be carried out for those people because they might bring to light a need that has been overlooked. A list of such people should be maintained in the event that future assignments become available which require their particular qualifications. There will be some people who will have to be rejected because they are unqualified for the kind of work they want to do. It must be remembered that it is more kind not to place a person in a position in which he cannot succeed than to place him and have him experience failure. Also, with respect to volunteers who would be working directly with clients, the agency has a responsibility to foresee situations that might be damaging to either the volunteer or the client.

Of utmost importance in the success of a volunteer program is the dedication and commitment of the volunteer. A definite commitment for a specific period of volunteer service is essential, especially in small beginning or pilot projects.

VIII. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

A general review of the agency's services, goals, and functions; a discussion of the policies of the agency as they relate to volunteers; an introduction of key staff and their responsibilities; and the establishment of working relationships with staff members should be included in the volunteer's orientation. This will enable the volunteer to see where he fits into the total plan of social services. It is the responsibility of the county department to provide appropriate orientation and training of volunteers.

Whenever possible, orientation should be given in groups, but it is not advisable to withhold orientation until a group can be accumulated. This might take quite awhile in a small community. In such instances, the content can be covered through individual tutoring. As soon as possible, tutored individuals should be brought together for group discussion and to view visual aids.

The amount of training beyond orientation will vary with the kind of assignment and the knowledge and previous experience of the volunteers. Decisions about the amount and content of training to be provided each volunteer are to be made on the basis of the volunteer's job description and information about the volunteer.

For example, training to become a transportation volunteer may comprise a lecture on safety measures given by the local traffic safety officer. On the other hand, the volunteer who is to provide direct services in a friendship or advocacy role within the framework of the social worker's service plan will need some special preparation for this even though the volunteer may have a certain expertise which he brings to the job.

When possible, training should be given in groups, not only to save time but also because the interaction of the members of the group is a significant part of the course, the exchange of experiences is enriching, and the sense of being part of a group with a common goal is strengthening.

Some orientation and training can be presented jointly for social workers and volunteers. When joint sessions with volunteers are used, clear differentiation between their roles should be emphasized in order that each will know what is expected of him and what the other is doing. Such joint meetings can contribute to getting acquainted and promoting mutual respect and understanding. Workshops offering opportunities for an exchange of ideas and sharpening of skills should be scheduled periodically, utilizing various resource persons in the community.

When volunteers are assigned new or additional activities, they should be trained appropriately, and experienced volunteers are often excellent trainers in some areas and their utilization is encouraged. Ideally, training should be an ongoing process, facilitated by various seminars, presentations and individual assignments which will strengthen the volunteer's skills and abilities.

IX. SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

Supervision should be provided which is appropriate to the nature of the work done by the volunteer. Adequate supervision must be provided to insure the maintenance of high standards of performance for the agency and also to provide the volunteer with the guidance and stimulation he needs to grow in the job.

There are two types of supervision--the technical and professional supervision provided by the staff member to whom the volunteer is assigned and the administrative supervision which will be provided by the Coordinator of Volunteers. In some instances, the Coordinator will assign a volunteer to another volunteer for supervision. This works well where a group of volunteers are responsible for the operation of a special project.

From the beginning volunteers should accept as a part of their normal duties the making of regular reports to the person in charge of their volunteer activities. This can be done in writing, in personnel conferences, or through periodic group meetings of volunteers.

--See that the volunteer understands supervision and evaluation and that he has a feeling of belonging.

--See that someone is always available to listen and give guidance.

--Be free to discuss problems or complaints and show an interest in his work.

--Include him in planning and improving the program. Give him a chance to recommend changes. Listen to his suggestions.

--Help him evaluate his performance every few months and recommend change if it seems to be needed.

X. RECOGNITION

Since volunteers work without pay and their motivation for continuing to work depends on their feeling of accomplishment, recognition is extremely important. There are two kinds of recognition--informal and formal--both of them important in communicating to the volunteer that his services are appreciated.

A. Informal Recognition

Informal recognition should be a continuous process. Staff gives individual recognition by providing a meaningful role for the volunteer, with direction, on a planned basis. Remember to:

1. Address the individual volunteer by name.

2. Be prepared for his assignment.

3. Be available to discuss work programs and problems as appropriate.

4. Provide the volunteer with an opportunity to grow by increasing responsibilities as he becomes more efficient in his assignment.

5. Provide the volunteer with an opportunity to participate in staff meetings on specific areas of development which can provide an excellent means of sharing ideas and planning together.

6. Whenever you particularly appreciate the work being done by a volunteer, tell him so.

Identification pins or special name tags which are worn by volunteers are other ways to recognize his special position.

B. Formal Recognition

Formal methods of recognition should be scheduled periodically by staff. There are a number of ways to give formal recognition to volunteers. Some agencies hold a tea or dinner or some special occasion at which service pens or badges are awarded. Others

select a "Volunteer of the Month" and honor individuals who have done outstanding work. Certificates of appreciation are often used. Newspaper articles with pictures telling about volunteer service and/or monthly columns in the agency's newspaper could be used.

Let your volunteers know that their efforts are appreciated--and do this often. The volunteer in the agency represents the community. When we recognize the volunteer, we recognize the community.

XI. EVALUATION

After a pilot or beginning volunteer project has been in operation for three months, an evaluation should be made. An effective evaluation is the best means of obtaining feedback on whether goals and expectations which were established at the beginning of the program were reached.

A. Goals

1. Expansion and enrichment of services to clients.
2. Better public relations for the agency.
3. The inclusion of all income levels and all age groups among the volunteers.
4. The growth and satisfaction of the volunteers.

B. Persons Involved in Evaluation

1. Clients

It is imperative that clients be given full opportunity to evaluate the services of volunteers and to recommend changes. This would include the client's evaluation of the services rendered, the effectiveness of the volunteer and the policies of the agency.

After the initial pilot stage of the volunteer program, client evaluation should be made at least once every six months. This can be accomplished in four possible ways: by the worker during regular visits, by holding group meetings of clients, through use of a questionnaire, or a combination of these.

2. Volunteers

Of equal importance to client evaluation is the evaluation by volunteers. A successful program requires that volunteers be happy in their assignments, feel they are providing a needed service, feel their services are appreciated, and in general, feel enthusiastic about the Volunteer Services Program.

3. Caseworkers and Supervisors

It is the caseworker who knows his clients' needs best. He is in a position to observe improvement in clients' situation as a result of the volunteers' efforts. He is also in a position to hear clients' opinions and reactions to the volunteer.

4. The Volunteer Coordinator

The volunteer coordinator is the middleman between volunteers and caseworkers and will continually receive feedback from both groups. His position allows him to have a comprehensive view of the entire program.

C. Record Keeping

If record-keeping is accurate and thorough, evaluation is already underway. Much of good evaluation simply comes from careful record-keeping. Regular tab should be kept on such things as number of volunteer hours; estimated value in financial terms; value of voluntary contributions in materials or facilities; program expense; ratio of staff time invested in volunteer to hours of volunteer output; volunteer turnover.

D. Points to Remember About Evaluation

1. Evaluation should not only be done at the end of the program. Evaluation should be an ongoing process.
2. Evaluations give not only negative results but can point out many positive results of the use of volunteers.
3. Even though the service of volunteers is free, professionals do have the right to evaluate it. Evaluation will convey to the volunteers the feeling that their service is worth the time and effort of the staff to consider with them if the program can be improved.

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